



Backgrounder: Jobs & Economy

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Background:

With the District's unemployment rate still above 9 percent, Dr. Benishek's priority remains private sector job growth in Northern Michigan. During 2011, Congressman Benishek visited many job providers in the District to learn more about their business and about ways that Congress could improve their industry and allow all them to hire more workers. Dr. Benishek has worked tirelessly to create a favorable business climate for timber and mining companies. Moreover, Dr. Benishek supported three free-trade agreements which will open up new markets to local businesses. Additionally, Dr. Benishek held a job fair on February 24, 2012.

Dr. Benishek's View:

Loosening the Noose of Federal Regulations...

"Excessive federal regulations continue to hamper business expansion and in some cases reduce local employers' current economic activity. Small business owners simply do not have the resources to comply with the ever growing Federal Register. In particular, Northern Michigan loggers, mill operators and miners continue to denounce bureaucratic roadblocks that prevent increased mining and the responsible harvest of federal timberlands. The simplest and quickest way to create jobs is to release the handcuffs of overregulation and red tape. We must insist on congressional review and approval of any government regulations that have a significant impact on the economy or burden small employers."

Increase Northern Michigan Manufacturing...

"One of the biggest reasons for the weak economy is that America does not manufacture like it used to. In addition to the South Korea, Panama and Colombia trade agreements, we need to make local manufacturers more competitive by continuously opening new markets to Michigan made products. Moreover, local manufacturers have told me they are looking to hire, but they have trouble finding labor with the necessary technical education. We need to continue to promote partnerships between these industries and community colleges and encourage STEM education."

Retool the Tax Code to Help Job Creators...

"The federal tax code needs to be reformed to allow American businesses to bring back their overseas profits without having to pay a tax penalty so they can invest in our economy and create American jobs."

Moreover, the corporate tax rate needs to be lowered so that businesses add domestic jobs instead of adding jobs in foreign countries.”

Maximizing Domestic Energy Production...

“We need to encourage all forms of domestic energy production, including expanding ‘fracking’ in Northern Michigan. Domestic drilling will lower gas prices, giving consumers greater purchasing power and leaving businesses with more money to expand. Furthermore, the President should approve construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline, which is estimated to immediately create tens of thousands of jobs nationally.”

Repealing the President’s Job-Killing Health Care Law...

“Once the new health care law is fully implemented, many small businesses in Northern Michigan will either be forced to reduce their workforce, or will be prevented from expanding. Under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, small businesses with more than 50 employees will be required to provide health care plans, or pay penalties. Small businesses will either have the added expense of health care plans, or they will downsize to be exempt from this new mandate. The House must continue to press for full repeal of PPACA.”

Key Initiatives:

Northern Michigan Farm Tour

Michigan is home to over 56,000 farms covering 10 million acres of cherries, dry beans, livestock and everything in between. The state’s agriculture sector contributes \$71 billion to the economy. Dr. Benishek got a firsthand view of the issues facing the First District’s farmers when he partnered with the Michigan Farm Bureau for a Farm Tour of several counties on October 19, 2011.

The tour began in Mackinaw City and proceeded south through the district’s farmlands. Meeting with farmers, the Congressman discussed how recently passed trade agreements will expand the cherry market overseas and learned how labor and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations are overburdening small farms. Constituents throughout the district had the opportunity to follow along as the Congressman updated his Facebook page during the tour with pictures, facts and commentary. The farm visits provided straightforward insight as Congress begins to consider authorizing a new Farm Bill.

Joint Forestry Conference

The Forestry Policy Conference, held on October 17, 2011 in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, was an effort to highlight current policies impacting national forests and discuss opportunities that will allow better utilization of forest resources across the four congressional districts represented. A multi-state and multi-Congressional District Forestry Advisory Council will be announced for the purpose of providing ongoing advice and counsel to the four members.

The conference was attended by Congressmen Dan Benishek M.D. (MI-1), Reid Ribble (WI-8), Sean Duffy (WI-7), and Chip Cravaack (MN-8), industry leaders, and others interested in forestry issues.

Joint Job Fair

On February 24th, 2012, Dr. Benishek co-hosted a job fair with Congressman Reid Ribble (WI) at the University of Wisconsin-Marinette. The goal of the job fair was to provide an opportunity for individuals looking for work to meet with potential employers in the Northern Wisconsin and Northern Michigan area. Many industries were represented looking to fill skills trade positions as well as office work openings.

Promoting Michigan Businesses

During 2011, Congressman Benishek visited many Northern Michigan job providers to learn more about their business and about ways that Congress could improve their industry and allow them to hire more workers. Among others, Dr. Benishek visited Wolverine, Lafarge, Kennecott, East Jordan Iron Works.

Promoting the Rogers City Power Plant

In 2007, the Wolverine Power Supply Cooperative filed the required permits with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) (formally Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment) to install a coal-fired power plant in Rogers City. The MDEQ initially denied the permit due to the company's failure to demonstrate the plant was needed for future supply needs.

Wolverine Power subsequently challenged the state's decision. In January 2011, the Missaukee County Circuit Court in Lake City, MI ruled that a lack of need for the proposed facility alone, separate from air quality concerns, *was not* a legal basis to deny the permit application.

Sponsored/Cosponsored Legislation:

H.R. 2209: "Pre-decisional Forestry Review Process" (Original Legislation)

To replace the current Forest Service administrative appeals process with a pre-decisional administrative review process modeled after the successful approach used in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, and for other purposes. As of December 15, 2011, H.R. 2209 was referred to the House Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy, and Forestry. This bill's language was included in the FY 2012 Appropriations Act.

Cosponsored Legislation:

H.R. 10: “Regulations From the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act of 2011”

Rep Davis, Geoff [R-KY-4] (introduced 1/20/2011)

Cosponsors: 204

Committees: House Judiciary; House Rules

Latest Major Action: 11/18/2011 Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 192.

H.R. 144: “Small Business Paperwork Mandate Elimination Act of 2011”

Sponsor: Rep Lungren, Daniel E. [R-CA-3] (introduced 1/5/2011)

Cosponsors: 194

Committees: House Ways and Means

Latest Major Action: 1/5/2011 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

H.R. 674: To amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the imposition of 3 percent withholding on certain payments

Sponsor: Rep Herger, Wally [R-CA-2] (introduced 2/11/2011)

Cosponsors: 269

Committees: House Ways and Means

Latest Major Action: 11/21/2011 Became Public Law No: 112-56

H.R. 1049: Regulatory Openness, Accountability, and Disclosure to Jobs Act of 2011

Sponsor: Rep Johnson, Bill [R-OH-6] (introduced 3/11/2011)

Cosponsors: 35

Committees: House Natural Resources

Latest Major Action: 3/11/2011 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

H.R. 2250: EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011

Sponsor: Rep Griffith, H. Morgan [R-VA-9] (introduced 6/21/2011)

Cosponsors: 126

Committees: House Energy and Commerce

Latest Major Action: 10/18/2011 Read the second time. Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 201.

H.R. 2898: Regulation Moratorium and Jobs Preservation Act of 2011

Sponsor: Rep Ribble, Reid J. [R-WI-8] (introduced 9/12/2011)

Cosponsors: 71

Committees: House Oversight and Government Reform; House Judiciary

Latest Major Action: 10/3/2011 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs, Stimulus Oversight and Government Spending .

H.R. 2681: Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act of 2011

Sponsor: Rep Sullivan, John [R-OK-1] (introduced 7/28/2011)

Cosponsors: 41

Committees: House Energy and Commerce

Latest Major Action: 10/12/2011 Read the second time. Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 192.

H.R. 909: Roadmap for America's Energy Future**Sponsor:** Rep Nunes, Devin [R-CA-21] (introduced 3/3/2011)**Cosponsors:** 73**Committees:** House Natural Resources; House Oversight and Government Reform; House Ways and Means; House Energy and Commerce; House Armed Services**Latest Major Action:** 6/3/2011 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Readiness.**Key Votes****H.R. 2681: "Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act of 2011"**

This bill cancels the implementation of the current Cement MACT rule and requires the Administrator of the EPA to issue new rules in 15 months that take into account costs of compliance, feasibility of implementation, and the potential impact on employment. It then allows industry five years to comply with the new regulations.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on October 6, 2011. The bill passed the House 262-161.

H.R. 2250: "EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011"

This measure will provide EPA with at least 15 months to re-propose and finalize new rules for boilers, process heaters, and incinerators; extend compliance deadlines from 3 to at least 5 years to allow facilities adequate time to comply with the standards and install necessary equipment; direct EPA, when developing the new rules, to adopt definitions that allow sources to use a wide range of alternative fuels; and direct EPA to ensure that the new rules are achievable and impose the least burdensome regulatory alternatives.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on October 13, 2011. The bill passed the House 275-142.

H.R. 1938: "North American-Made Energy Security Act (Keystone XL Pipeline)"

The "North American-Made Energy Security Act," seeks to expedite the Presidential Permit approval process necessary for the Keystone XL pipeline extension. A Canadian research institute estimated that this project will create 340,000 jobs and \$34 billion in revenue for the United States government. Construction of the pipeline alone is estimated to create 10,000 jobs in the United States.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on September 26, 2011. The bill passed the House 279-147-1.

H.R. 910: "Energy Tax Prevention Act of 2011"

This bill would prohibit the EPA from making regulations on green house gas and automobile emissions.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on April 17, 2011. The bill passed the House 255-172.

H.R. 1229: The "Putting the Gulf of Mexico Back to Work Act"

This bill would end the Administration's de facto moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico in a safe, responsible, transparent manner by setting firm time-lines for considering permits to drill. It reforms current law by requiring the Secretary of the Interior to issue a permit to drill and also requiring the Secretary to conduct a safety review.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on May 11, 2011. The bill passed the House 263-163.

H.R. 1231: The "Reversing President Obama's Offshore Moratorium Act"

This bill would lift the President's ban on new offshore drilling by requiring the Administration to move forward in the 2012-2017 lease plan with energy production in areas containing the most oil and natural gas resources. The bill sets a production goal of 3 million barrels of oil per day by 2027, which would reduce foreign imports by nearly one-third.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on May 12, 2011. The bill passed the House 243-179.

H.R. 3078: "To implement the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement"

This measure must be ratified by the House so that the U.S.-Colombia Trade Agreement can come into force.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on October 12, 2011. The bill passed the House 267-167.

H.R. 3079: "To implement the United States-Panama Trade Promotion Agreement"

This measure must be ratified by the House so that the U.S.-Panama Trade Agreement can come into force.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on October 12, 2011. The bill passed the House 300-129.

H.R. 3080: "To implement the United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement"

This measure must be ratified by the House so that the U.S.-Republic of Korea Trade Agreement can come into force.

Rep. Benishek voted in support of this legislation on October 12, 2011. The bill passed the House 278-151.